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April - June • 2008

Central District Health Department

Medical Reserve Corps

SPECIAL OLYMPICS by Mary Barlow-Brusse



2008 is going to be a busy year for the Central District Health Department MRC. This summer we will begin gearing up for our participation in the Special Olympics Winter World Games taking place in February of 2009. The Games are going to be an experience like no other for our organization and as the new CDHD MRC Coordinator, I couldn't be more excited!

Our area will be welcoming roughly 2,000 athletes from 84 different countries. The total number of additional people expected for the games is anywhere from 8,000 – 15,000, taking into account their trainers, team support people, families of the athletes and Special Olympic staff. Medical Reserve Corps members have been asked to assist Ada County Paramedics and other emergency response agencies in staffing first-aid stations at the five event venues throughout our area. It's estimated that we will need about 1,500 MRC volunteers to do provide this service.

I am confident that our MRC is up to the challenge and look forward to the next year as we prepare for this unique, exciting, and challenging event!

NACCHO GRANT AWARD

The Central District Health Department (CDHD) Medical Reserve Corps recently received a \$5,000 Capacity Building Award from the Office of the Surgeon General's Office of the Civilian Medical Reserve Corps (OCVMRC).

The funding, awarded by the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) on behalf of OCVMRC, supports Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) unit activities such as volunteer recruitment, training, and supply purchases.

Our MRC unit grant award has been earmarked to pay for increased recruitment efforts and training for the additional volunteers that will be needed as we gear-up for participation in the public safety component of the Special Olympics World Winter Games in February, '09.

Almost \$3.2 million was awarded to 513 MRC units across the United States.



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National MRC News

The concept of community resiliency is gaining momentum at all levels. At the highest level, for example, Homeland Security Presidential Directive 21 (HSPD-21) identifies community resilience as one of the "Critical components of Public Health and medical preparedness." MRC is one of the several working groups that are developing the implementation plans for this directive from the President.

Together, we are part of a national network of more than 150,000 volunteers in over 700 MRC units. Each unit is working to help their community, and thus, their nation, strengthen its capabilities to be better prepared to respond to and recover from any emergency event that may arise.



Yvonne Madlock

Legislative Update:

On October 3, 2007, Yvonne Madlock, Director of the Memphis and Shelby County Tennessee Health Department, testified on pandemic flu preparedness before the Senate Subcommittee on State, Local, and Private Sector Preparedness and Integration. Madlock discussed the new partnerships that have developed and strengthened as a result of pandemic flu preparedness. Madlock also spoke of her county's Medical Reserve Corps – 2,700 volunteers strong – and the importance of such a local resource

in the event of a pandemic or other emergency. Copies of the written testimony are available at <http://www.naccho.org/press/testimony/index.cfm>

Meet the New MRC Coordinator at CDHD

Greetings Central District Health Department Medical Reserve Corps (MRC) volunteers! My name is Mary Barlow-Brusse and I'm the new MRC Coordinator at CDHD. I have been here a few months now and I am still impressed by the strong local support for our Medical Reserve Corps program.

I came to CDHD after 7 years with Ada City-County Emergency Management as the Public Education Specialist. During my time with ACCEM, I managed the agency's public education and outreach program and had the opportunity to work with a wonderful group of emergency response volunteers. I soon came to truly appreciate what an invaluable resource you are - we couldn't do it without people like you!



Mary Barlow-Brusse

I have recently returned to Boise State University full-time to pursue a Bachelor of Science Degree in Nursing, so I'm currently only in the office part-time. However, I encourage your feedback *anytime*! If I'm not in, please leave me a message and I will get back to you as soon as I return to my office. Balancing school, work, and family is tough, but I strongly believe in the importance of the MRC program and know that its success depends on the relationships built and maintained with our volunteers.

I am excited about some of the challenging tasks-at-hand such as the development of our program's new training plan and our participation in the upcoming Special Olympics Winter World Games taking place in February of 2009.

I look forward to getting to know you over the next few months as we move forward, continuing to build and strengthen this great resource for our community – the Central District Health Department Medical Reserve Corps.

Training & Education

We have been developing a new training plan for all of our MRC volunteers. The new plan will guide us toward the goals of meeting federal requirements and optimizing our ability to respond efficiently and effectively in the event of an emergency. While some courses will be mandatory, we are attempting to keep those to a minimum, as we realize everyone's time is limited. Many of the courses will be completely voluntary and offered as an additional resource available to you. We will have all the details regarding our new training plan available to you soon. Until then, we encourage you to take a look at some of the other training and educational resources available to MRC members:

FEMA Independent Study Programs

FEMA and the Emergency Management Institute (EMI) offer self-paced courses designed for people who have emergency management responsibilities and the general public. All are offered free of charge. FEMA's Independent Study Program (ISP) offers courses that support the nine mission areas identified by the National Preparedness Goal.

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Incident Management• Operational Planning• Disaster Logistics• Emergency Communications• Service to Disaster Victims | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Continuity Programs• Public Disaster Communications• Integrated Preparedness• Hazard Mitigation |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

To get a complete listing of courses available through FEMA ISP, go to: <http://training.fema.gov/IS/crslist.asp>

Local classes

There are a number of valuable training and educational opportunities found locally, available to MRC members. Many of them can be found through the Idaho Learning Management System (LMS) at www.idahoprepares.com. If you would like to register for the classes available through the LMS, please contact Mary Barlow-Brusse at 321-2215, or e-mail mbbrusse@cdhd.idaho.gov.

CERT

Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) is a free, 16-hour course designed to teach the basic response skills that may be necessary by each of us in the event of a major disaster. The curriculum for this course assumes that help is hours, to days, away and covers skills such as: basic fire suppression, basic search & rescue, disaster medical operations, disaster psychology, team organization, and terrorism threat awareness. For more information about CERT training in Ada County, contact Paul "Crash" Marusich, Ada County Emergency Management, at 577-4750. Outside of Ada County, contact Robert Feeley, with Idaho Bureau of Homeland Security (BHS) at rfeeley@bhs.idaho.gov, or 422-3033, to find CERT training in your area.

Recent update to CDHD MRC Volunteer Database....

THANK YOU!

You may recall receiving a letter along with an update form in the mail recently.

We have been contacting each of you in an effort to update our database and ensure that we have the correct address, phone number and e-mail address on file for you.

We value you and your time. We sincerely appreciate all of you who completed and returned those forms to us. On behalf of your community, we thank you for your willingness to respond in the event of an emergency. In order to continue the growth of our local Medical Reserve Corps and to ensure you'll be there when our community is in need, it is crucial that our emergency contact database contain accurate information so that we can contact you when you'll be needed most.



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A Look Ahead

Keep an eye on this section for a schedule of quarterly meetings, upcoming volunteer opportunities, response exercises, and other public health events!

April

National Donate Life Month

May

CDHD-MRC Quarterly Meeting & Training Session – *exact date TBA*
Melanoma / Skin Cancer Detection and Prevention Month

11-17 National Women's Health Week

12 National Women's Health Check-up Day

We want to hear from you

This is YOUR newsletter! We want your help in making it as interesting and useful as possible for MRC members – just like you. We want to know what you'd like to see, read, and learn more about. Please share your ideas, news, and suggestions with us. E-mail Mary at mbrusse@cdhd.idaho.gov or call 321-2215.

Visit us online at: www.cdhd.idaho.gov

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS POINTERS

Your Family Disaster Plan

Disasters can strike quickly and often times without warning. You could be forced to evacuate your neighborhood or be confined to your home. If you were told to evacuate your family today, where would you go and what would you take with you? What would you do if basic services such as water, gas, or electricity were cut off for an extended period of time?

Families can and do cope with disasters by preparing in advance and working together as a team. Follow the steps below to create your family's disaster plan. Knowing what to do is their best protection and your responsibility. Only then will you be able to respond as an MRC member when your community needs you most. To learn more about being better prepared, please visit: www.ready.gov

4 Steps to Safety

1 Learn About the Hazards in Your Area

- ☐ Find out what types of disasters are most likely to occur in your area.
- ☐ Learn about your community's warning signals. Ada County relies on sirens in the foothills, the media and the Emergency Alert System.
- ☐ Ask about how to care for your pets after a disaster by calling the Idaho humane Society. Only certified service animals are allowed in emergency shelters.
- ☐ Find out how to help elderly or physically challenged people in your neighborhood.

2 Create a Disaster Plan

Meet with your family and discuss why you need to prepare for disasters. Explain the dangers of fire, severe weather and earthquakes to children.

- ☐ Discuss the disasters that are most likely to occur. Explain what to do in each case.
- ☐ Pick two meeting places: One right outside your home in case of sudden emergency, such as a fire, and one outside your neighborhood in case you can't return home.
- ☐ Ask an out-of-state person to be your 'family contact' so that other family members can call and tell them where they are.
- ☐ Discuss what to do in an evacuation. Where will you go and what will you take with you?
- ☐ Find out about the disaster plans at your workplace and your child's school, or daycare.

3 Put Your Plan into Action

- ☐ Post emergency telephone numbers by phones
- ☐ Teach children how and when to call 911.
- ☐ Show each family member how and when to turn off all utilities at the main switches.
- ☐ Make sure that you have adequate insurance coverage, i.e. homeowners, renters, and flood.
- ☐ Show each family member where the fire extinguisher is kept and how to operate it.
- ☐ Install smoke detectors on each level of your home, especially near bedrooms.
- ☐ Put together a disaster supplies kit - enough emergency supplies to meet you family's needs for at least 3 days.
- ☐ Take a Red Cross First Aid and CPR class.
- ☐ Determine the best escape routes from your home. Find two ways out of each room.
- ☐ Identify the safer spots in your home for each type of disaster.

4 Practice & Maintain Your Plan

- ☐ Quiz your kids every 6 months so that they remember what to do.
- ☐ Conduct fire and emergency evacuation drills.
- ☐ Replace stored water every 3 months and stored food every 6 months.
- ☐ Test and recharge your fire extinguisher according to the manufacturers' instructions.
- ☐ Test your smoke detectors monthly and change the batteries at least once a year.

Emergency Preparedness Pointers

Preparing for a Flood

Floods and flash floods are two of the most powerful forces in nature. Due to our recent years of drought conditions, many people do not realize the level of risk we face along the Boise River from serious flooding. With the construction of the Lucky Peak Dam in 1954, river flow has been controlled and determined by factors such as precipitation, runoff and the amount of water already contained in the reservoirs. Releases must be made to make room in the reservoirs for anticipated spring run-off. When the river flows increase, it's important to know what to do to protect your loved ones and your property from the effects of flooding.

Flash floods occur most often during the summer months and can be triggered by intense rainfall concentrated over certain types of terrain such as the Boise Foothills. This sudden downpour can quickly saturate the ground until it can hold no more. These floods often trigger mudslides that can carry large amounts of debris, destroying buildings, bridges or anything else in its path. Flash flooding is the number-one weather related killer in the U.S., taking as little as 6 inches of moving floodwater to knock an adult off of their feet and just 2 feet to float your car. *Never try to walk or drive through floodwaters.* Flash floods happen very quickly. You will not always have ample warning. Develop a plan *before* the flood.

☐ Assess Your Flood Risk

Is your home located in the 100 yr floodplain? How about the 500 yr. floodplain? Is your home located near the mouth of one of the gulches of the Foothills? What is the history of flooding in your area? One way to find out is to call your local Planning & Zoning Office.



☐ Purchase a Tone-Activated Weather Alert Radio

The warning for a flash flood could be as little as 5 minutes. A tone-activated weather alert radio will instantly alert you of a Flash Flood Warning that has been issued by the National Weather Service. They can be purchased at any Radio Shack store.

☐ Purchase Flood Insurance

Most homeowner policies do not cover flood damage. Check with your insurance agent. There is normally a 30-day waiting period for flood policies to take effect.

☐ Develop an Evacuation Plan

Identify your evacuation route, including alternates, and know where you will go if you are told to evacuate. Consider what you will do if separated from other family members. Pick a place where you all can meet – somewhere out of the flood zone.

☐ Assemble a Disaster Supplies Kit

Your kit should contain those items that you may need during an evacuation or extended loss of utilities. Some basic items include a first aid kit, food & water, personal medications, battery operated radio for the latest storm information, flashlight & extra batteries and cash. Store your kit in an easy to carry container in a convenient, easily accessible place known to all family members.

☐ Practice your Plan

Make sure that your entire family knows your evacuation plan. Periodically review the plan with your family, including the location of your Disaster Supply Kit.

Know the difference between a flood WATCH and a flood WARNING

- A **Flood WATCH**: flooding is possible in the area, be alert and stay tuned to the TV or radio for current information. Be prepared to evacuate to higher ground if so instructed.
- A **Flood WARNING**: a flood has been reported and is occurring or is imminent.
- If a **Flash Flood WARNING** is issued in your area, evacuate immediately. You must act quickly.

When Sirens Sound.....Seek High Ground

Seven sirens were installed in the Boise Foothills to warn residents living in those areas of flash flooding. In the event of a flash flood emergency, the sirens will sound a steady, continuous tone for a minimum of 3 minutes. The sirens are tested at noon on the first Saturday of each month. During the test, they sound for approx. 15 seconds.